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RESEARCH IN EUGENICS¹

MAN is studying all phenomena. He has at last come to study himself. Not his diseases, not his language, not his customs merely, but also his more intimate self. Man is studying man as an animal, who varies in his traits, who selects his mates for better or worse, who has a larger or smaller number of children that are more or less healthy and live for a varying period. The races of man are being studied not merely to list their differences, but to find how those differences arose and how they are transmitted to progeny and how they intermingle. We are studying the laws that govern the distribution of traits in the family; we are studying the consequences of combinations of these traits in the instincts, interests and behavior of individuals. At last we are studying man as the product of breeding and as the subject of an evolutionary process. And we are studying the human germ plasm, its composition, its mutations and its mixtures.

And why do we investigate? Is not enough known to warrant *propaganda*; and should we not better organize for a campaign to change what needs changing? Alas! we have now too little precise knowledge in any field of eugenics. We can command respect for our eugenic conclusions only as our findings are based on rigid proof, a proof that is either statistical or experimental. Only as we are able to base our statements on scientific, quantitative data can we hope to carry conviction and not arouse contrary opinion. People do not have heated discussions on the multiplication table; they will not dispute quantitative findings in any science.

It is largely due to the extraordinary vision of Mrs. E. H. Harriman, the founder of the Eugenics Record Office, that in this country eugenics is more a subject of research than of

¹ Address at the opening session of the International Congress of Eugenics.